



November 4, 2004



Firearms charge includes assault allegation

A federal grand jury in Providence has charged, **Matthew Jones**, 30, with being a felon in possession of a firearm and alleges that Jones used the firearm in connection with an assault. Woonsocket Police arrested Jones last November.

United States Attorney Robert Clark Corrente, Thomas Wlodyka, Resident Agent in Charge of the Providence Office of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, and Woonsocket Police Chief William Shea jointly announced a two-count indictment, which the grand jury returned yesterday in U.S. District Court, Providence. Jones, whose address is unknown, is detained at the Massachusetts Correctional Institution, Shirley, and will be brought into U.S. District Court, Providence, for arraignment on the federal charges.

According to the indictment, Jones possessed a .40 caliber, semi-automatic pistol on November 19, 2003. The indictment alleges that Jones used the firearm in connection with an assault and that he posed a "substantial risk of death or bodily injury to multiple individuals...." The indictment also charges Jones with possessing more than five grams of crack cocaine.

An indictment is merely an allegation and a defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty. The statutory maximum penalty for being a felon in possession of a firearm is ten years in federal prison and a \$250,000 fine. The maximum penalty for possessing more

-more-

than five grams of crack cocaine is 20 years imprisonment and a \$1,000,000 fine. Federal sentencing is determined on the basis of guidelines that rely on such factors as the specific nature of an offense and a defendant's criminal background, if any.

Woonsocket Police investigated the case, with assistance from the **Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives**. Assistant U.S. Attorney Richard W. Rose is prosecuting the case as part of **Project Safe Neighborhoods**, a Department of Justice initiative against gun crimes. Under Project Safe Neighborhoods, the U.S. Attorney's Office, working with Providence Police, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Rhode Island Attorney General's Office, and other agencies, aggressively prosecutes federal firearms offenses in an effort to incarcerate those responsible for gun violence and deter others from committing gun crimes. Since 2001, federal firearms prosecutions in Rhode Island have more than doubled and gun offenders have been sentenced to a total of more than 500 years in federal prison.

-30-

Contact: 401-709-5032

Thomas.connell@usdoj.gov